



The Hon Troy Grant MP

Minister for Police
Minister for Emergency Services

IM19/742
MAPS19/106

Mr Leighton Drury
State Secretary
Fire Brigade Employees' Union
1-7 Belmore Street
SURRY HILLS NSW 2010

Via email to office@fbeu.net


Dear Mr Drury

Thank you for your recent letter to the Premier about PFAS contamination and management at Fire and Rescue NSW (FRNSW). I have been asked to respond on behalf of the Premier.

FRNSW relies upon NSW Health information and recommendations to determine its approach to PFAS matters. Current NSW Health advice is that blood tests are not recommended as it is not known what health effects, if any, are caused by PFAS.

I have forwarded your letter and the "Inquiry into the management of PFAS contamination in and around Defence bases" report to the Minister for Health for advice.

Should NSW Health change its recommendations or position on voluntary blood testing, FRNSW will inform its staff and the Fire Brigades Employees Union and determine the appropriate measures.

Thank you for taking the time to write to the Premier on this issue.

Yours sincerely


TROY GRANT MP
Minister for Emergency Services

28 FEB 2019



The Hon Troy Grant MP

Minister for Police
Minister for Emergency Services

The Hon Brad Hazzard MP
Minister for Health
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001

IM19/742
MAPS19/106

Via email to office@hazzard.minister.nsw.gov.au

Brad.

Dear Minister

I have received the attached letter via the Premier from Mr Leighton Drury, State Secretary of the Fire Brigades Employees' Union (FBEU) about PFAS contamination and blood testing at Fire and Rescue NSW (FRNSW).

The Premier asked me to respond to the FBEU and a copy of that response is also attached.

The letter addresses the recommendations from the Inquiry into the management of PFAS contamination in and around Defence bases report published by the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade.

I am advised NSW Health is responsible for health matters relating to PFAS and that FRNSW determines its management of PFAS contamination upon the recommendations from NSW Health.

I ask that NSW Health consider the FBEU's request and the Report and advise of any changes to the current recommendations regarding PFAS contamination and blood testing.

The contact at FRNSW is Deputy Commissioner Jeremy Fewtrell on email Jeremy.Fewtrell@fire.nsw.gov.au or telephone (02) 9742 7127.

Yours sincerely

TROY GRANT MP
Minister for Emergency Services

28 FEB 2019

Enc



21 December 2018

The Hon Gladys Berejiklian MP
Premier of NSW

By email: willoughby@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Premier,

I write regarding the tabling of Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade's report into PFAS contamination and management in and around Defence Bases in the Commonwealth Parliament on 4 December 2018.

The Union urges the NSW Government to adopt all the Committee's recommendations, but in particular Recommendation 3 which states:

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government review its existing advice in relation to the human health effects of PFAS exposure, including to acknowledge the potential links to certain medical conditions.

As you may be aware, PFAS was in widespread use in the NSW Fire Brigades prior to March 2007, when the Union banned its use, despite opposition from the Department in the Industrial Relations Commission.

It is also of concern to the Union that Fire and Rescue NSW continues to reject the entirely reasonable proposition that it provide firefighters the option of blood tests for future reference given the present uncertainty around the health effects of PFAS exposure. I seek that the NSW Government direct FRNSW to do so as soon as possible, per Recommendation 4 of the Report:

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government, as soon as possible, undertake measures to improve participation in the voluntary blood testing program for PFAS. This should include measures to:

- *increase community awareness about the purpose and importance of the tests, and the associated epidemiological study;*
- *simplify the testing process;*
- *extend the program to be available in additional areas; and*
- *ensure Australia's testing strategy is comparable to international studies.*

Further, the Committee recommends that the Government consider the potential value of blood testing to monitor the effectiveness of measures being used to break PFAS exposure pathways in affected communities. This will necessitate longitudinal analysis of those who have been previously tested and additional tests being made available, after an appropriate period, to persons who have previously been tested.

Fire Brigade Employees' Union of New South Wales

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